



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)

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SFP Procedure Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Version 4

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) **Does this new process alter other DDA processes?**

⇒ This process only relates to the award of the Service Funding Plan (SFP), which is after an individual has been notified by the DDA that they have funding for the individual to start services, or after the RFSC has been approved. This procedure does not eliminate or alter the technical requirements of the DDA or Medicaid, such as those relating to service changes, service requests, eligibility, or any other procedure outside the award of the individual's funding. All necessary steps to verify prerequisites and requirements, and to obtain documentation, remain in effect. This guidance is only applicable to the submission and award of funding for an individual's new or changing services.

2) **How is the Medicaid eligibility process affected by this process?**

⇒ For the purposes of the SFP process, the intent was not to change existing processes for placements and the completion of waiver enrollment documentation. The waiver application should be completed (upon availability of funding) and approved prior to the SFP being processed, with the exception of unique circumstances such as transitioning youth placements. Under no circumstances should a waiver application be held due to the completion of a SFP. A waiver application can be and must be submitted when completed, irrespective of a completed SFP. Identification of a provider is not required for the initial plan of the waiver application. The plan should include needed services, and if the provider is not yet known, "To Be Determined (TBD)" can be noted.

3) **How will the timeline work for individuals who fall under the Transitioning Youth category?**

⇒ Transitioning Youth are a unique placement category and do not have to abide by the timelines in this policy due to the time sensitive nature of their situation. Please continue to follow historical policies and guidelines on when and how to submit the waiver application and SFP for approval and award.

4) **How much time does the provider have to decide whether or not they can serve the individual?**

⇒ There is no time limit on this action, but the RFSC will expire within 6 months if no provider is selected.

5) **Step 18.1. In current practice the direct service provider obtains the signature from the individual, what is the purpose in having the resource coordinator obtain it in the new procedure?**

⇒ Step 18.1's purpose is to verify that the individual does indeed agree to the SFP. The RC, working on behalf of the individual, obtains the individual's/family's signature to ensure that the individual/family consents to the SFP.

- 6) **There was no step to account for resource coordinators completing and submitting WC12 forms in older versions of the new SFP process, did that mean Resource Coordinators no longer had to complete that task?**
- ⇒ No. The intention of the new SFP operating procedure was to improve the approval and award of funding and not to alter waiver reporting procedures. The new SFP operating procedure did not instruct Resource Coordinators to stop completing the task. Resource Coordinators need to still complete this task, and if historically have not been doing so, need to start.
- ⇒ Step 18.2: This step has been added to standardize and account for the processing of SFPs in conjunction with waiver reporting protocols, by including the processing of necessary waiver documents, WC12 forms. All applicable WC12 forms should be completed by the Resource Coordinators. Steps 19 and 20 have been modified to reflect the processing of the WC12 forms: RC should then send the signed SFP along with the WC12 form to providers, so that providers may review and sign the document and send them to the Regional Office.
- 7) **Steps 19 and 20. The current practice is for the direct service provider to review and sign the SFP before sending the Resource Coordinator (RC) and the RC sends the SFP to the DDA. Why has this been changed, such that now the RC is sending the SFP back to the provider and the provider sending it to the DDA?**
- ⇒ The service funding plan is a funding contract between the DDA, the individual and the potential service provider. The provider is the agency that will be reimbursed by the DDA, and therefore constructs the SFP for approval and award by the DDA based on their costs. As the author and originator of the SFP and at the request of providers, the DDA has decided that it is more appropriate to have the provider submit the individual funding contracts to the DDA for approval and award.
- 8) **To what address should the Provider send the SFP?**
- ⇒ Below are the email addresses by regional office that providers should send their SFPs:
- a) Central Maryland Regional Office: waiver.cmro@maryland.gov
 - b) Eastern Shore Regional Office: ESRO-SFP.DDA@maryland.gov
 - c) Southern Maryland Regional Office: smro-sfp.dda@maryland.gov
 - d) Western Maryland Regional Office: wmro-sfp.dda@maryland.gov
- 9) **What happens if the SFP is not received within 20/10 days of making a provider selection?**
- ⇒ The DDA will question as to why the SFP was delayed and make a decision on how to proceed further on a case by case basis.
- 10) **What is the time frame for step 21, “Regional Office send email notification of SFP received date to provider and copy RC.”**
- ⇒ This should be immediate, as Regional Offices have designated email inboxes with automatic notifications.
- 11) **If the original RFSC does not adequately reflect all services needed, then would a new RFSC have to be completed for approval and start back to step #1?**
- ⇒ Yes. However, provider selection would presumably already be complete which would allow the process to move along more quickly.
- 12) **What is the goal regarding the steps attempting to process the start date in relation to date of receipt?**
- ⇒ The purpose of the new service funding plan award process is to: accelerate the timeframe in which DDA providers, on average, submit SFPs and supporting documents; align SFPs with approved RFSCs; decrease the timeframe in which DDA staff processes SFPs; minimize retroactive payments for standard (non-emergency) RFSCs.
- 13) **If the Regional Office wants further clarifications or further negotiations on the SFP, then will they contact the Provider directly instead of the RC from this point onward?**
- ⇒ Yes. This was often occurring in current practice, the DDA decided to standardize this practice. However, the DDA will work to keep the RC in the loop to validate the individual’s needs and desires.
- 14) **If the SFP is revised during review and negotiation of the SFP with the Regional Office and the direct service provider, what are the steps for the individual, family and Resource Coordinator to review and sign the new revised SFP before it is finalized?**

⇒ This will be decided on a case by case basis by the regional office, depending on the extent of revisions as they relate to the services provided to an individual. As described in Step 25.2, the resource coordinator should be involved in this process to the extent that is practical.

15) If changes need to be made to the SFP, can that be done by the Regional Office or does the SFP need to go back to the provider and to redo the SFP?

⇒ Changes can be made, such as in step 24, as long as the provider and the DDA agree to the changes.

16) Can RC be notified of adjusted start date also?

⇒ Yes, this will occur in Step 25.2.

17) If the SFP is denied, what is the process for the individual and family to appeal these SFP actions taken by DDA?

⇒ DDA has consulted with the State Attorney General on appeal rights and found that there are no appeal rights for funding decisions made by the DDA. The individual and family have the right to appeal decisions on services but not decisions on funding. In the event of a funding denial that could not be remediated, the RC would need to work with the family to locate another provider.

18) Should provider agencies no longer begin services prior to award letter being sent? As opposed to providers starting with the Letter of Intent?

⇒ Correct. The letter of intent will be eliminated and the award letter will be the only notification from the DDA signifying that a provider can start funded services. Services prior to the authorized start date will be the financial liability of the providing agency. The only exception to this will be emergency situations as described in the SFP procedure.

19) At step 31 is there a time limit on how long it may take the Provider to initiate the start of service of an approved SFP?

⇒ Not necessarily, but the DDA's expectation is that the proposed start date by the provider will be close to the actual start date. Step 32 was added to assist the DDA in knowing when individuals actually started services.

20) By what mode should the provider report the start date to the RO?

⇒ Email.

21) What is the effective date of the new process and what do the transition timelines mean?

⇒ The DDA will implement its changes September 1st, providers and resource coordinators should have their new roles and duties in place by October 1st, with attempts to adhere to the timeline. Then on November 1st, the timelines and guidelines will be strictly upheld.

22) What will happen with SFP's currently awaiting approval? Will they be subject to these new timelines, or should we expect the traditional wait time for a response?

⇒ SFP submitted prior to September 1st, will be processed in accordance with the prior procedures, but it will be awarded by the Regional Director on behalf of the Executive Director.

23) What will happen with approved RFSCs with no provider selected? Will they be subject to these new timelines?

⇒ Yes, approved RFSC in which a provider has not been selected will expire 6 months from the approval date, if a provider is not selected. Examples:

a) If a RFSC was approved on June 15, 2013, then the individual and/or his or her advocates have until December 15, 2013 to notify the Regional Office of the provider selection, or the approval of the RFSC becomes invalid.

b) If a RFSC was approved on January 8, 2013 and the individual has not chosen a provider, then the RFSC has expired because June 8, 2013 has passed.

⇒ If a RFSC were to expire, then the individual and/or his or her advocates will have to restart the request for service change procedures.